The New Christianity

A Quarterly Journal
for its promotion and interpretation

"He Glorified His Humanity"
William F. Wunsch

Critical Points in Regeneration
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Jacob's Ladder
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In This Issue

Each article in this issue represents substance or some aspect of a course presented at the Institute for New-Church ministers which was conducted at the New-Church Theological School in Cambridge, Mass., last August.

The Rev. William F. Wunsch, Pastor of the New Jerusalem Church in Washington, D. C., discusses the central doctrine about the Lord, that *"He glorified His humanity."*

In *Critical Points in Regeneration* Dr. Howard Davis Spoerl examines Swedenborg's descriptions of spiritual crises and the stages of regeneration and compares them with the findings of modern psychology. Dr. Spoerl, formerly Professor of Psychology at the American International College at Springfield, Mass., is now Pastor of Community Churches in Jeffersonville and Cambridge, Vermont.

Jacob's Ladder shows the steps by which the Old Testament writers, particularly the prophets, climbed to an ever more inspiring vision of God. The Rev. Richard H. Tafel is Pastor of the Church of the New Jerusalem in Philadelphia, Pa.

Modern Rivals of Orthodoxy are discussed by Dr. Frederic R. Crownfield, Editor of the New Christianity and Professor of the History and Philosophy of Religion at the New-Church Theological School.

"He glorified His humanity"

WILLIAM F. WUNSCH

WHEN we hear about the Lord's life, we usually hear about what He said, what happened at His hands, and what happened to Him at the hands of others. We rarely hear about what happened in Him. And yet, much must have happened in Him!

Even what the Lord called His "glorification" has been regarded as something which at length happened to Him—at the Ascension He regained the glory which had been His at the first.

Most of us are eager to know how a genius in letters, in music or in the leadership of men became what he was. Lincoln's growth to his full stature has held an undying interest. Devotees of Thackeray have just greeted with delight the publication finally of his letters and notes. We are habitually curious to learn by what experiences, or perhaps heritage, or self-disciplines, a rare personality reached the eminence and rendered the service he did.

Of whom, if the inquiry is not irreverent, would such intimate knowledge be so supremely worth while as of the Man of Nazareth? There may be greater limitations on it; on the other hand, as it would be of infinitely more value and consequence to us, the limitations may be less than in our awe and reverence we are disposed to think.

The Christ shared our nature—in Him God took our nature upon Him. For this nature to have served as it did and become what it did, the Lord must have altered it mightily. He transcended utterly the low level of insight native to us. He overpassed the narrow ways of our love for others, and loved mankind with a love unaware of race and class and station. Experiences of the most transforming kind must have taken place early and late. For when He began His ministry, He stood forth a sinless life, and the world beheld in Him God as well as perfect Man.

The Christ alluded in various ways to His inner experience. Now it was a "baptism" with which He must be baptized, and He was "straitened" until it was accomplished. Again it was a "going to God." Was this to occur only on death and Ascension,

or was He "going to God" during His life? Plainest reference of all, He was to be "glorified." Did this mean only the entrance, at the Ascension, on the glory which He had had "before the world was"? Still on earth He felt He was assured by God within Him, "I have both glorified thee, and will glorify thee again." The glorification, whatever it was, was in progress. "I have glorified thee." The Christ prayed to be glorified, He strove to be, and He was assured that He was being glorified. What was the Transfiguration if not a precious glimpse, granted to three of the closest disciples, of the Person that was coming to be in the glorification?

From the peerless Humanity which confronted men, and from these allusions of the Lord's own, a most significant inner experience is to be inferred. It is to be concluded from another consideration; "believest thou not that the Father is in me?" Can God have been in Christ without a transforming effect on the human nature? Must not the Divine have penetrated that whole nature, until it was a Divine Humanity? Must not the incarnation have continued and been progressive? "Believest thou not the Father is in me, and I in the Father?" Or are we to suppose that God assumed a human nature, merely utilized it as means to His presence on earth, then abandoned it, and that this was all?

A profound development in the Lord's person, rather, is indicated—something which was happening in Him all along, and not alone a climactic event which at length befell Him.

Yes, but can we know anything about such a lifelong glorification—beyond these allusions to it in the Gospels? We are baffled by human genius; will we not surely overreach ourselves in the mysteries of the Master's inner life?

The teaching of the New Church dwells on the idea and faith that the Lord "glorified His humanity." The conception is its unique contribution to thought about Christ. Admittedly, its emphasis is on the outcome of the glorification—on the fact that in the Lord's humanity, glorified or made divine, God is visible to thought and near to prayer. That teaching does also attempt, however, to say how the glorification was effected—by what discernments and struggles and manner of inner life the Lord made the humanity divine. For insight into this growth our

teaching says there is a story in Scripture upon which to draw—else the inquiry *would* be curious and speculative and too bold to be reverent. The story of the Lord's lifelong glorification is told deep in Scripture. Even as the Scriptures stand and read, they are pervaded by the thought of an ideal life, a peerless Figure, a Man of God, a Servant of Jehovah filled with His Spirit. More deeply may they not tell the story of the growth of such a Life? Our teaching finds such a depth of meaning in Scripture, and declares we have it to rely upon for some knowledge of the Lord's inner life. He fulfilled the Word by fulfilling this story—not by matching scattered predictions only in His public life, but by living out this innermost truth of Scripture. At last and gloriously the ideal life of which the Scriptures had spoken tantalizingly, was lived to the full in the flesh on earth. Only from the Word does the teaching of the New Church affect to know anything of the Lord's inner being, as from being a Jew, the Son of Mary, a finite man among men, He became Man, wholly the Son of God, the Divine Humanity in which God is forever "God *with us.*"

I.

The Gospels record moral and spiritual struggles in the Lord's life. There were many more besides the "temptations" at the beginning of His ministry and at the close in Gethsemane. Was there not a struggle against precipitancy in His mission when, after overawing the learned doctors in the Temple at twelve years of age, Jesus returned to Nazareth and was subject to His parents? During the ministry there were frequent signs of effort and struggle to possess Himself of the power to do a healing, to meet a need, to raise from the dead. Did He have to master, as He grew up, a most understandable impulse to denounce the sinfulness which must have been so abhorrent to Him? "I came not to condemn." He once rebuked two disciples who, He told them, did not realize what spirit they were of. He spoke as though He knew the spirit well, out of intimate acquaintance with it in His assumed human nature. An American has written, "Greater is he who is above temptation than he who being tempted overcomes." Is this true? At least it cannot be said of Him who was greatest of all; He was tempted, and He overcame. He was

here in order to see if in a human nature He could meet mankind's evil and weakness and overcome them. Rebirth was asked of human beings. Could the Lord achieve rebirth and more? Could He realize a transformation of human nature which would be pattern and power for our rebirth? "As many as received Him," the Evangelist says, "to them gave he power to become the children of God . . . born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." To think that the Lord was above temptation is not only to ignore the record; it is to question the very work which the Lord was to do. Either to glorify His humanity or to redeem the world entailed moral and spiritual struggles, inconceivable struggles for Him, who shared our nature.

II.

The Christ thought and spoke, loved and lived with a will and power of His own, and at the same time spoke as He heard and did as He was bidden. The transformation of His nature or His glorification was the "mutual" or "reciprocal" work of the Christ and of God within Him (to use terms used in our teaching). The Christ was reaching up, and the Father within Him was reaching down. The Divine was moving to fuller occupancy of the human nature, and the Christ was welcoming more and more of the Divine into that nature. In the story of Abraham's call out of his native land and from his kindred, it is thrilling to discover the Christ's "first observation," a Child still, of the Divine movement within Him. An infinite Love, such as He did not feel in those around Him, was stirring in Him. To this He longed to give Himself. Of this He must become the embodiment. It could be done only over years. It was to be accomplished only in gradual transformation of heart and spirit and mind. There was an initial question to agitate and pursue Him—was this actually what He was called to be? Even that Messiah or Christ whom His people's Holy Scriptures promised? How much the full assurance meant then when it came at His baptism: "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

As He mounted into the spirit of Infinite Love, so He moved also into all truth. He was not only to command truth, as one can with the mind; so He did in the Temple at the age of twelve to

the wonder of the doctors. He was to embody truth in Him—in every movement of thought, in the fibres of His mind, in the manner of grasp and utterance until there could be words which would not pass away, until hearer and all the world would be convinced and not surprised, should He say, "I am the truth."

So the Lord disposed Himself before infinite Love and the truth and God, while God within Him moved to take the humanity for His own. The union of Divine and human in a glorified Humanity was effected from above and from below. On this glorification two states attended in the Lord's experience. There was the one of upreaching, struggle, prayer and utter devotion even to the passion of the Cross—a state of humiliation; and there was the other, of arrival, again and again, in the gradually realized Divine Humanity—a state of glorification.

III

It is impossible to think that this utter change of glorification was somehow pent up in the historical Figure of the Christ. It was not an experience with the limits of finite individuality. It could not be held to this one human nature. "For their sakes I sanctify myself." It involved the world's redemption. The Lord's glorification progressed as He met, in the instance of His own nature, the mass of evil in mankind and overcame it. His struggles ushered Him abroad into the conflict between good and evil in the universe, in the unseen world and on earth. True of us, Paul's words in *Ephesians* were sweepingly true of Him: "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (vi. 12). "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (*Luke* x. 18). God Incarnate was redeeming men. Insight into the glorification falls short if we do not see attending on it the redemption of the world. "The Lord glorified His Humanity and redeemed the world by the very same acts." Meeting all evil, and wrestling with man's disabling moral and spiritual environment, the Lord, as He won the victory over heredity, also reconditioned the unseen environment for men to repeat the victory in themselves. "I have overcome the world." "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down

with my Father in his throne." The Christ was "steadily expanding in His private spirit to the dimensions of universal humanity; so bringing for the first time in history, the finite human bosom into perfect experimental accord with the infinite Divine Love" (*Christianity, the Logic of Creation,* Henry James, p. 215).

IV

The glorification with God's own self proceeded upon the whole Person of the Christ, soul and mind and body. We have been speaking so far of transformation of spirit and mind. Could the penetration of the humanity by the indwelling Divine have left the physical person untouched? Could that penetration have been arrested at some point? Must it not have embraced the whole Person of the Christ to the body itself? How else could He rise in a way we do not, leaving nothing in the sepulchre? However this mystery may be brought somewhat within our grasp, the fact that the glorification meant some manner of retention of the body was urged upon His disciples by the Lord Himself. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." His biddings, "Handle me," and "See," were heard, indeed, "in the spirit." The post-resurrection manifestations came to the eyes and touch of the spirit of some, not—as they would have done to any and all—to the physical eye and touch. "Flesh and bones" were then a reality in that region of being. How shall we grasp this? Can we understand it at all? We can reflect that no flesh or bones would exist at all were it not for flesh-making and bone-making powers constantly at work. These energies are more truly flesh and bone than any individual body or the aggregate of human bodies. Is then this the secret? That these creative energies became the Christ's in the plenitude of the power in which He rose, and in the fulness of His glorification? His Divine Humanity would be inclusive, indeed, of our life then. The saying, too, would have a surprisingly increased pointedness: "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." In whatever way the persisting "bodily" presence may be faintly grasped, however, true it is that God, always in "firsts" or origins, in the Divine Humanity is also in "lasts," not remotely as

He ever was, but healthfully near, Alpha and Omega of human life and existence.

* * * *

The teaching of the New Church about the glorification of the Lord's Humanity is fuller interpretation of the Lord's life on earth. To the story of what happened to Him and at His hands, itself the most dramatic of stories, it adds the moving story of what happened in Him. This story brings the Lord before us in might and glory, and also very near, and in the measure of our need and realization, very dear. As He comes to men so, does He not come the second time?

Reflections

Never fear you will not later grow
  Into the likeness of the things you love!
Nothing is surer. Faces come to show
  The shadow of their thoughts, as clouds above
Cast their likeness on the sea below.

Though changing tides of joy and grief may roll,
  The height and breadth that we reflect
In life make up its color as a whole—
  With daily choices we select
In time the depths and shallows of the soul.

Margaret Crownfield.

Critical Points in Regeneration

Howard Davis Spoerl

PSYCHOLOGY'S most useful contribution to the theory of spiritual development is the concept of integration of personality. Numerous researches in the fields of personality, developmental, social, and clinical psychology have yielded a fairly consistent picture of individual growth from birth to maturity. Amid the variation in methods of study, traditions of procedure, terminologies, and auxiliary concepts, there is general agreement that the personality, growing out of native properties and reactive behavior, is organized around motive-systems which at first give it an egocentric orientation but may later become so modified as to "decentralize" the ego when maturity is attained. This course seems to bear a close analogy to theological descriptions of "spiritual conversion" from self-love, pride, etc., to a riper outlook of deepening faith and charity; nor is it indeed a mere analogy. *Regeneration* and *reintegration of the personality* are terms which, from different points of view, denote a single process of development. The theological approach to regeneration is concerned with values basic to a religious philosophy; its procedure has usually followed some traditional orthodoxy. The psychological approach to reintegration is not charged with upholding any metaphysical values and its procedure is empirical. Occasionally theology has produced its own empirical procedure, partially fusing the "theological" and "psychological" approaches. The most fruitful instance occurs in Swedenborg's philosophy—or psychology—of regeneration.

From the point of view of religion regeneration is a more inclusive concept than reintegration. As portrayed by Swedenborg it regards the growth of the individual in the light of eternal destiny, and while it applies to the personality as a whole it is especially concerned with what theology calls the "spiritual" as distinguished from the "natural" level of man's existence. Reintegration, however, has no reference to eternal destiny, and in application by most psychologists disregards the spiritual-natural distinction—although this need not prevent its affecting the "spiritual" region. Concrete evidences of reintegration can

throw some light on the supposed process of regeneration, apart from any dogmatic assumption of theological axioms. To what extent can we observe the process of regeneration? What, in actuality, can be *done*—through religious education, reading matter, pastoral activity, or psychological counseling—to assist the process? For that matter, leaving regeneration aside what can be done about the more external process of reintegration? A steady stream of new books on pastoral counseling and psychological guidance impresses on ministers and even on laymen their need to become practical psychologists. Today, as about a generation ago, psychology is proclaimed to be the key to salvation.

Conditions for Regeneration

In an attempt to answer the above questions we may begin by surveying the conditions under which regeneration—or reintegration—occurs. Nobody claims that the fruit of these processes, spiritual and psychological maturity, develops automatically. It is clear that maturity is neither an outstanding nor inevitable characteristic of modern man's nature. Nevertheless it is admitted that people sometimes overcome maladjustments and really achieve maturity. Similarly if regeneration is a reality some people supposedly progress toward its fulfillment. Whatever happens in such instances is governed by regulating conditions, and these are mainly internal conditions. Their operation is indicated by an outline of sequential stages in regeneration, empirically checked against their congruent stages of "reintegration." Such an outline formulates not only the large-scale growth-to-maturity but also any of the condensed episodes that are critical points occurring repeatedly in the total development.

In describing the first stage in regeneration, Swedenborg makes this clear:

> Every man is in a state of tranquility in the beginning of his life, or in infancy, but in proportion as he advances in life, or grows up to manhood, he removes himself from the state, because he gives himself up to worldly cares, and thence to anxieties. . . . Nearly similar to this is the case with the new life in the man who is being regenerated; in the beginning he is in a state of tranquility, but as he passes into a new life, he also passes at the same time into an untranquil state. (*Arcana Coelestia,* No. 3696.)

In psychological terms *tranquility* is the integration-thus-far-attained; it is a kind of "resting phase" of the personality. In this phase "remains," as Swedenborg calls them, exert an important influence. Jung's conception is that of a harmony of "archetypes"; Künkel speaks of the "original we-experience." In less technical language one might simply state that in periods of smooth conscious "normality" (relative, of course, to a particular orientation of personality), a literal *tranquility* is imposed by the "fair weather situation" or perhaps by the ascendance of one's "better nature."

Working behind the scenes, however, is what Swedenborg calls the *proprium,* a disruptive property of the person's distinctive individuality which is certain to focalize conflicts created by contrary external demands and internal stresses. Künkel describes the breaking up of the harmony called the "we-experience." As this dissonant center accumulates and disposes personal energies for what amounts to the compounding of sin, the soul is said by Swedenborg to be "confirmed in falsities," with self-love as the motive; the personality, in psychological discourse, polarizes around a heightened *egocentricity*. Thus the stage is set for the enactment of the spiritual crisis—or psychological conflict.

In the ensuing phase the polarization is completed by a "counter-revolutionary" organization around an opposite pole, of tendencies that the egocentric orientation one-sidedly disregards. Such tendencies may constitute the "voice of conscience." Swedenborg designates the state of "affirmation of faith and goodness"; it has often been likened to the hegemony of the "super-ego" in depth psychology. *Affirmation* is substantiated by the "remains," or in Künkel's portrayal an egocentric "breach-of-the-we" acquires significance only from the prior "we" that now seeks to be re-established on a new level of integration. Egocentricity is never *absolute*; even in schizophrenic extremes its demands function mainly in the realm of fantasy. The dialectic of conflict calls for *two* elements; without sin there could be no redemption, and without conscience there could be no sin.

Temptation or Conflicts

The next stage is one of active inner struggle; it is for Swedenborg the state of "temptation," and for modern psychology, the

seething of an actualized conflict among cross-currents of *frustration.* The ego cannot overwhelm the personality, but the personality still uses the ego as its motivational center. The conflict engenders its own quasi-stabilizing reaction, which utilizes all the stage properties in the equipment locker: repression, rationalization, regression, projection, etc. Some psychologists use the term "emotional isolation" to describe the state of the personality in the unstable equilibrium of the reaction.

Temptation is Swedenborg's insightful generic term for *conflict.* Spiritually temptations are "pains of mind induced by evil spirits." The person's *consciousness* of them is restricted to the feelings of stress and the occasions on which they are projected. But "man does not know whence this anxiety comes, because he is unacquainted with its spiritual origin." (*The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrines,* No. 187.) Also we read that true spiritual temptations are rare:

> Spiritual temptations are little known at this time. Nor are they permitted to such a degree as formerly, because man is not in real faith, and would therefore be overcome. In place of these temptations there are others, such as misfortunes, griefs, and anxieties . . . which in a measure subdue and break up the life of a man's sensuous pleasures and lusts. (A. C. 762.)

This depiction has a familiar ring to the psychoanalyst or clinical psychologist. In severe depressions actions and thoughts may indeed become dumbly mechanical, *e.g.* in neurasthenia. The personification of the good and evil "spirits" struggling for victory has been portrayed less vividly by depth psychologists who discuss battles between "id impulses" and "super-ego," or between the "pleasure principle" and the "reality principle." Certainly clinical evidence validates the experience of "emotional isolation," "depersonalization," or whatever else it may be called.

The depth of spiritual crisis is the state of *despair,* so named by Swedenborg because internally it represents a "despairing of salvation."

> The spiritual life is generally brought to this extremity in temptations; for in this way the natural life is extinguished, since then the inmost in the midst of despair is held by the Lord in the combat against falsity. Therefore also that despair is soon dissipated by solace which is afterward instilled by the Lord; for after every spiritual temptation there is consolation, and as it were new life. (A. C. 8567.)

When despair is reached "the natural life is extinguished"; in modern psychological language, disintegration leads to reintegration, with a new motivational arrangement replacing the bankrupt dynamics of conflict. The person is still *unconscious* that the vital stronghold "is held by the Lord." When the turning-point is reached, moreover, the "new life" is neither total nor permanent. As Swedenborg aptly shows, the reorientation marked by receiving "consolation" is followed by ups and downs called "fluctuations" which parallel the psychologist's "regressions" to former positions of apparent greater security. Finally, when a particular crisis has run its course and the individual settles down to await the next episode, there is a return to the state of tranquility. In psychology this might be called the "resolution of the conflict."

Elements Effecting Crisis

The conditions of regeneration-reintegration include among others the condition of *readiness* and that of a virtually complete resignation in the throes of conflict. A spiritually or psychologically disintegrating crisis cannot occur unless there is readiness for it. In a less sophisticated manner than Swedenborg, Christian theology in general has always insisted on the importance of a "sense of sin," of "conviction of sin," etc. In a psychological guidance situation a college student suffering from repressed hysteroid conflicts, when invited to face the implications of her pose of a flippantly distracted sex adventuress, decided "I think I'm fairly happy the way I am, so I'll let it alone." She had been told that she was unfortunate in not being faced with some immediately serious crisis that might take her out of her fool's paradise. Three months later, when her father suddenly died, she returned remembering this comment.

The "resignation" during a crisis is of very great importance to the psychologist. Using psychological methods of investigation, what sort of glimpse can we get of the dynamics of spiritual "despair" when as Swedenborg puts it the Lord eventually assumes direction of the battle? Certain evidence indicates that the deepest our analysis can take us is to the point of the disintegrated personality's need for "making the first move." In a dynamic equilibrium such as an extreme impasse, *something* has to give

way first. Published discussions of personalities being reintegrated under certain clinical conditions do not tell us literally *what moves* or how it moves. All we have is what amount to metaphorical depictions. Nor can theology, by using such concepts as "humility," "grace," "faith," etc., go any closer to the core than psychology with its terminological dynamics.

The experience that remains so impervious to investigation is presented in an especially effective manner in Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. Self-convicted of sin and under penalty imposed by "society," the Mariner becomes aware of his unworthiness to live while his shipmates lie dead, and he tries to pray. "A wicked whisper" frustrates this attempt, and he falls to watching the water-snakes moving with phosphorescent shimmer. He is deeply affected by their indescribable beauty, and

> "A spring of love gushed from my heart,
> And I blessed them unaware!"

This unintentional, spontaneous act he credits to the pitying intervention of his "kind saint."

> "The selfsame moment I could pray;
> And from my neck so free
> The Albatross fell off, and sank
> Like lead into the sea."

True to the psychology of emotions, the weary, isolated Mariner relaxes completely by falling asleep. Upon awakening the Mariner learns that although evidently "forgiven" his sin, he cannot undo its effects. "The man hath penance done, and penance more will do" is the judgment he overhears. When he dwells upon the effects as seen in the fate of his shipmates, he again finds it impossible to pray. Eventually brought safely to dry land he is still sometimes in fear and under compulsion to continue his penance by telling others of his experiences and admonishing them that "he prayeth well who loveth well."

"Making the first move," despite all sense of unworthiness and even, it seems, without respect to conscious volition, is theologically speaking the proximate act of resignation or humility that brings grace to the repentant soul. In psychological terms some kind of "motivational shift," "restructuring of the ego," "reorientation of personality" is said to be taking place. It is simply impossible in either theology or psychology to state *what* happens.

It is equally impossible, even though some of the conditions of the elusive occurrence may be formulated, to *incite* their operation through voluntary modification of mental outlook! The Mariner was heartily desirous of improving his wretched spiritual state, and sought willingly to use every known available means. He brooded contritely on the tragedy he had caused. He accused himself. He acknowledged his unworthiness. With complete sincerity, so far as he was aware, he tried to pray. While these acts of repentance may have provided necessary preparation for receiving grace, they did not produce it and the crowning effort to pray failed. The turning-point was the unbidden gushing of the "spring of love," when he "blessed them unaware." The poet emphasizes the involuntary character of this blessing by ascribing its permission to an outside influence, a guardian saint. *Something* within the Mariner "made the first move"—what?

Clinical Illustrations

In clinical situations known to the author it was sometimes possible to see evidences of "making the first move"; more frequently it was impossible to say that the move was manifested even though reintegration took place to some extent. A small percentage of cases intimately studied involved conflicts that the clients themselves characterized as being of religious significance. To be sure, a psychological conflict may be markedly religious in import without utilizing "religious" symptoms. While all "psychological" problems of clinical practice by definition involve the need for "reintegration," and while theologically speaking all persons supposedly need regenerating, it might not follow that avowedly "religious" conflicts tap the "spiritual" region of the regenerative process. Yet it is likely that in such cases one comes as close as possible to "observing regeneration" in one or more of its crises. Swedenborg states that

> spiritual temptations . . . are frequently induced by natural temptations, for when man is in these . . . if then thought occurs concerning the Lord's aid, concerning His providence, concerning the state of the evil, . . . then spiritual temptation is conjoined to natural temptation. (A. C. 8164.)

In a few instances of serious maladjustment in college students who were Roman Catholics it was possible to discuss their diffi-

culties in terms of Catholic theology and ritual practice. In these cases the "remains" were not only active but also traceable to an ultimately common source of implantation. While making psychological formulations of the problems it was easy to demonstrate that psychologically speaking faith is security, pride is egocentricity, grace is susceptivity to love, etc. This approach often evoked the comment that the demonstration was nearly like remembrance from childhood. In the case of a very devout student who had achieved an extreme degree of emotional alienation from family and friends

> an effort was made to show H. that despite her conscientious and scrupulous care for the exercise of devotions, she had somehow missed the point of application of religion and its grace, and that living faith depends on a prior exercise of charity. H. was a little discomfited, but accepted this.
>
> She was advised to remove the barrier between herself and her father, further, to renounce her self-pitying preoccupation with her isolative goals and symbols, and to come into the light of the Lord through the use of His grace as love toward the neighbor. H. suddenly observed that this formulation was precisely the experience that had come out of a Novena made four years previously, although without the specific applications to persons and events around her, and that she had tried in vain to recapture its light.

This individual gained, or rather restored, many insights of reconstructive value, using devotional practices as aids to reintegration. Yet it never became at all clear that the emotional isolation was removed so much as transferred to more strategic ground where it had greater effectiveness as an egocentric weapon!

Similar intimately religious discussions of life problems with other Catholic students in at least two cases resulted in out-and-out refusals to confess and restore communication with the Church that had been interrupted some time before when the spiritual character of crises was perceived. This refusal was in spite of admissions made as to the probable psychological and spiritual aid that might be obtained. In several instances confessions were offered the psychologist and one person implored that he "give absolution." Theoretically, if the verbal and other machinery of religion has any validity, where remains were operating, sins acknowledged, misinterpretations corrected, and the means of resolving conflicts not only made available but given devotional

reinforcement—more ought to have happened than usually did happen, to bring the client any degree of "new life." To be sure, sometimes severe crises were "lived through" ("lived down"?) and everyday adjustments were improved, but it cannot be claimed that much in the way of regeneration was observed!

On the other hand, in the case of a student of indefinite Protestant background, ignorant of theology, who at the time of puberty identified her repressed childhood anxiety as having come from home tensions in reaction to her father's philandering, an interesting quasi-religious readjustment was recorded. After making the clarifying factual discovery she became outwardly indifferent and through five years of adolescence thought only of seeking a good time. The erotic element was prominent, without incurring lapses of moral control. In the midst of her pleasure-seeking life, at the age of 17 while attending church with her mother she was impressed by the latter's surreptitious weeping.

> "During the prayer I felt sick with remorse," apparently for having "deserted" her mother for social preoccupations; "on the way home I fought back the tears. I became aware of my real self that night and as I thought things out I knew that I was no longer afraid of Dad. I wondered whether I hated him, but came to no conclusion."

Here the gross conditions are nearly opposite to those marking the Ancient Mariner's crisis. There is no apparent reason why the experience should have occurred when it did rather than earlier or later. There is little reason to suppose that the pastoral prayer was determinative. Moreover, the mother had often been seen to weep on other occasions. Yet here we seem to have an instance of the mysteriously prompted "making of the first move."

While scientific psychology cannot with propriety conclude with Swedenborg that the decisive dynamic in a crisis of regeneration is Divine intervention invited by the soul's readiness to receive it, science must admit that the "active push" that resolves the conflict is otherwise an "unknown." It is noteworthy that Swedenborg himself, who defines this "active push" as the Lord's presence, continually reiterates the statement that the individual ought to acknowledge the Lord's aid even though its direct operation *must of necessity* be absent from his conscious experience. Certainly psychological findings, as far as they go,

are in no major respect inconsistent with Swedenborg's psychology of the spiritual crisis.

Conclusions

What can be concluded from our rather halting attempt to "observe regeneration" with the aid of psychological instruments? For one thing, that regeneration-in-progress—or the lack of it—cannot be positively identified or actually observed. A corollary is that it cannot be deliberately and observably *aided*. Psychological techniques do not regenerate—but neither do theological teachings! If souls exist and are regenerated, their salvation is through Divine influence. Theology merely describes what might happen and how. Similarly psychology never regenerates, or even reintegrates personalities. *Life* reintegrates, while psychology sets forth the conditions for the recurrence. The Lord, not any psychologist, or Swedenborg, is the Redeemer.

If the efforts of the clinical psychologist to help to "readjust" personalities aim short of a possible target centered in "spiritual regeneration," the theological practitioner, such as a counseling pastor, typically overshoots the reasonable mark for him. Although it may be perfectly true that personal problems are basically spiritual problems, his theology should have taught him that such problems *as externally presented* are not *immediately* spiritual and therefore must first be approached on the natural level. This will usually be required even in cases where the client, happening to know some theological jargon, himself presents the problem as spiritual. The strange sterility of even an enlightened theology in a practical crisis is augmented by the pastoral habit of "short-circuiting" his guidance.

The value of religious education as currently administered is extremely doubtful. In so far as it consists of explanations of theological processes it is a waste of time, regardless of whether the explanations are true. If there can be any such thing as effective religious education its emphasis ought to center in "remains"—*not* doctrines. The most practically valid remains would be *experiences*—not preceptive descriptions of experiences. A remembrance of how love conquers fear, as once experienced, is worth all the books ever written on the theological, psychological, or metaphysical status of love in its numerous aspects. Besides

remains, devotional practices are important, indeed they are a kind of remains.

The belief that the formation of a "spiritual church" can be knowingly assisted *via* theological knowledge is a delusion. This statement can stand side by side with complete acceptance of the reality of the spiritual church in the world. Like regeneration, it's probably there, but the task of the religious community is properly that of providing the conditions for its emergence in so far as we can do this. If the setting is emphasized, the fulfillment—ever the Lord's part of the work—will come through Providence. Meanwhile in working with people, in educating, and in cleaning up the social order, we have scarcely begun to consider the problem of the setting; we have been too busy trying to do things beyond our depth.

A final observation might be that the hazards of living, as the psychologist knows them in the world of the twentieth century, are far more complicated than Swedenborg ever dreamed they might become.

Jacob's Ladder

Richard H. Tafel

MUCH has been written about Higher Criticism and modern Bible study in general, both as to its methods and results, without realizing the significance of its fundamental contribution to our fund of knowledge. The research of the last two hundred years has proved to the satisfaction of all but the most biased and most stubborn the fact that the Bible carries within it, as does the human being, the story of its development; or, to use another figure, that this beautiful cathedral of worship still bears the marks of its building. The work of the Bible scholar enables us to see the evolutionary character of the Book. For it is a Book of progress, a Book of steps, the story of man's wonderings and of his groping toward the light. It is a book of questions and answers. It is the record of man's search for God, and of God's unfolding himself to man. The Bible is at once the product and the story of revelation.

When we used the figure of the Bible as the cathedral of man's spiritual aspirations reaching heavenward toward God, we could well have gone further. In a mysterious way, often not sensed by man, God became the co-architect of the undertaking, inspiring and opening the minds of men, and implanting something of himself, his character, his purpose in this spiritual building that was to show forth both the glory of God and the glory of man. And carrying our figure still onward, this cathedral was not built at once, with stones cut from the same quarry by the same workmen. Many hands, many tools, many ideas went into its fashioning. Like the old cathedrals of Europe, it was the product of slow growth over the centuries, each age, each craftsman leaving his mark. The trained eye can discern the handiwork of the numerous craftsmen and the style of the different master-builders; he can give the approximate dates of the various changes in plan, the perfecting of techniques, and the refinements in style. The scholar thus continually reminds us of the time, the labor, and the thought that has gone into the building of the cathedral of the Bible, lest we forget about the Jacob's Ladder of spiritual progress which mankind has climbed.

Yet, despite the immense amount of work that he has done, and the far-reaching results that he has produced, the modern Bible scholar has long been accused of tearing the Book to pieces, of making the Bible nothing but a tattered patchwork of documents, sources, editors, redactors, and compilers. As a matter of fact, the new approach restores to us the whole Book. It gives a comprehensive, inclusive view of the Bible and enables us to see it, not piecemeal, but as a whole. We are saved from the old, impossible attempt to harmonize the Bible with itself, to resolve its conflicts and contradictions. It enables us to keep the true historic perspective as to the development of our religion, so that we can rightly evaluate *Ecclesiastes* 9:4-6 and *I Corinthians* 15:53-55 for instance, or, within the same book, these two contradictory concepts: "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me" and "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin." Modern biblical scholarship restores to us the whole Book seen as a unified development from early and simple beginnings to great conclusions.

We can now trace the beginning and the development of the process whereby mankind, over long periods of time, in different situations and under changing circumstances, has reached upward to God, and whereby God has reached down to man—the process we know as revelation. We can not only believe this as a matter of doctrine, but we can clearly and in detail watch its progress. Because we can date the different stones, or blocks of material, that have gone into the building, we are able in any book or passage to locate ourselves with reference to this progressive revelation of God. By arranging the Bible material chronologically, proceeding from the earliest to the latest writing, we can hew out great pathways through Scripture. Along these we can pursue main lines of development, watching concepts such as God, man, right and wrong, immortality, etc., grow before our eyes from crude beginnings to lofty, spiritual conclusions that leave us wondering and worshipping. Let us follow one of these lines of development, the idea of God, and watch how God and man have worked together in the process of revelation.

Early Concepts

The Bible in its present form begins with God walking in the Garden of Eden and ends with God as a spiritual presence "in whom we live, and move, and have our being." Between these two poles lies a vast area of groping, discovering, refining, developing, and revealing. The most primitive idea of Jehovah (or, better, Yahweh) that the Hebrew people had was that of a storm God associated with violent exhibitions of nature. Moses found him in the smoke and fire and earthquake of Mt. Sinai (*cf.* Elijah's later experiences there). Later, in the time of Deborah, this is still his character: "They that strive with Yahweh shall be broken in pieces; against them will be thunder in heaven." (*I Sam.* 2:10.) The Psalmist saw the help of the Lord when he "thundered in the heavens," hurled "hailstones and coals of fire," and, like arrows, sent out his "lightnings manifold." (*Ps.* 18:13-14.) Then, of necessity, when Yahweh became the leader of his people he became a God of war. "Yahweh is a God of war: Yahweh is his name." (Song of Moses.) When Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still, "Yahweh fought for Israel." David defied Goliath in these words: "I come to thee in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel." And the Psalmist could rightly say: "He teacheth my hands to war; so that mine arms bend a bow of brass." A storm God, dwelling on a mountain, whose major activity was war—such was the beginning of the development of the Jewish-Christian idea of God.

By the covenant agreement at Sinai, Yahweh became the tribal God of Israel. As such he loved Israel and hated her enemies—he was bound to hate the Canaanites, the Amalekites, etc. Because of his relentless hatred of his people's enemies, he was pleased by the sacrifice of prisoners ("Utterly destroyed" means "devoted to Yahweh," *cf.* the Canaanites at Zephath, Aachan at Jericho). The long drawn out story of Jewish-Christian endeavor to outgrow nationalism in theology as well as in practice began in this belligerent and ruthless tribalism of Israel's primitive war God.

Yahweh at first was pictured with frank, physical realism, with all the anthropomorphic features of hands, feet, eyes, nose, etc. Yahweh said to Moses: "I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with my hand until I have passed by, and I will

take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back; but my face shall not be seen." He walked "in the cool of the day" in Eden, talked familiarly with Adam, ate and conversed with Abraham, and wrestled with Jacob. In the communal meal, the central feature of the early sacrificial system, the fat and blood were reserved for Yahweh. At first these were rubbed on the crude altar stones. Later these were offered up by burning, so that "Yahweh smelled the sweet savour" (*Genesis* 8:21). There were early pictorial and plastic representations of Yahweh, and the later injunction against image-making was well warranted. Micah, the Ephramite, had an image of Yahweh; Gideon made one of captured gold; David used one to escape his enemies. And along with this anthropomorphism went anthropopathism, the ascribing to God of all the human emotions, hatred, jealousy, vindictiveness, disappointment, regret, etc.

Progressive Changes

But when Israel left the desert and entered Canaan, taking Yahweh physically with her in stone tablets in an ark, her idea of her God underwent one of its most important changes. Yahweh became the territorial deity of Canaan, the ark serving as a bridge between Sinai and Palestine, limiting Yahweh in his sovereignty to the territory of his people. But Israel had to make good her claim to the new land. At first she hung on by her eyebrows to the hill country, gradually infiltrating into the valleys and lowlands, until by war, by settling down side by side with the native population, by intermarriage and absorption, she finally gained the ascendency. But something of the utmost significance had happened to Israel during this long period—her people changed from nomads to agriculturists. This affected her religion among all other things, and Yahweh became of necessity an agricultural deity. The inevitable process of syncretism went on, and the two cultures were blended. So too was the worship of Yahweh and that of the baals, the Gods of Canaan, until Yahweh became a baal, or rather *the* baal. The baals, the gods of plenty, and Yahweh, the God of war, became identical—united into Yahweh, the Baal of Canaan. He took over as his own the agricultural feasts, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Tabernacles Week, and the Feast of Harvest. He took for himself all the

ritual, the traditions, the stories, and the sanctuaries of the land. But the cost of this victory was tremendous. Before, Yahweh was brutal, but was virile, austere, and chaste; now he became licentious like the baals whose fertility cult he inherited. How was this God, Yahweh, ever to become the righteous, pure, holy, highly exalted, the almighty, the Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth?

Now while Israel had undergone the great changes incident to the transition from nomad to farmer, and, along with her God had experienced fundamental changes in character, there always existed a protestant party, *e.g.* the Rechabites. Israel, on the ridge of Ephraim, retained her set-up on the old basis with the old clan idea of justice which she had brought with her from the desert. At first Israel had been a closely knit social group of family, clan, and tribe with the premium placed on conformity and the emphasis on group solidarity. The tribe or group was everything, the individual having rights and privileges only because he was a member of the group in which these existed. As nomads they had a keen sense of right, of custom, of usage, according to which justice was enacted simply and swiftly on the basis of these tribal mores.

In the Bible it is the clash between the religion of the Israelites and that of Canaan that is high-lighted; we are not usually aware of the social conflict that arose when the nomadic ethics of Israel faced the commercial civilization of Palestine. The struggle was not between two sets of religious ideas in the abstract, but between two economic and social cultures. It was a struggle between the stratified, unequal society of a settled people against the tribal brotherhood of the nomads; a struggle also between their gods as sanctifying two deeply antagonistic economic and social systems. In this conflict Israel waged a losing fight because its machinery was not geared to deal with the new conditions it met in the more highly organized civilization. The group solidarity was broken, and in adjusting itself to the new life the premium was placed on non-conformity. This led to turmoil, confusion, and moral anarchy: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did what was right in his own eyes." (*Judges* 17:6.)

The Contribution of the Prophets

But though "Mishpat"—Yahweh's social justice—broke down in practice, it was an idea, a conviction, that was never to be lost in Israel. It now focussed its attention on the rights of the individual as over against the group, or state, which represented a hated social system. The prophets, from Elijah on, fought for Yahweh's social justice, for the rights of the individual. This is the whole point of the Naboth-Ahab incident and of Elijah's stand as Yahweh's champion. The contest between Yahweh and the foreign baal, Melkart, was not so much a theological discussion as a social revolt. Melkart, a visible symbol of the hated social set-up which, backed by royal authority, threatened not only Yahweh's worship but Yahweh's social justice. Elijah, while not denying that other gods existed, maintained that Yahweh was the one and only God for Israel and that his way was to be unchallenged in his land. We are thus beginning to trace out the factors in the development of God toward not only monotheism, but toward ethical monotheism.

The prophets lost this battle for individual rights. They did not succeed in preserving the social justice of the early nomadic brotherhood. What they protested against became the norm in Israel—a king-tyrant, stratified society, slave labor: "They covet fields and seize them, and houses and take them away: and they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage." (*Micah* 2:2.) Yet they won the war. They prevented the identification of Yahweh with the social and economic inequalities of his people. They did not allow their Hebrew God to sponsor the Hebrew *status quo*. They associated him instead with an ethical standard which judged and condemned it. Yahweh, the moral judge, would throw into discard even his chosen people if they violated his ethical standards! But Yahweh, this God of absolute justice, was concerned with right and wrong no matter where it occurred and would enforce his standards on all peoples. But didn't this imply that Yahweh was stronger than other gods even in their own territory, that his sovereignty was not limited to that of his country and his people? So be it! Thus, of necessity, a long step was taken toward absolute ethical monotheism by this people who took monotheism morally in earnest.

By the time of Jeremiah, Israel had achieved practical mono-

theism and thought of Yahweh as super-nationalistic and thoroughly ethical; a God just, loving, and holy, the one great God of Israel. But how could the average person be persuaded that Yahweh was one God when he was being worshipped at many local shrines with different local attributes and coloring? The answer found in 621 B.C., the reform of King Josiah, or the Deuteronomic Reform, was to abolish all the local sanctuaries and to center all worship in the Temple at Jerusalem. We read in *II Kings* 22 how this was done. But the danger of localizing God in one place! What if the Temple were destroyed? He would then have no abode on earth! How could he be worshipped? But perhaps we are getting ahead of our story. Yet it was just a few years until the prophets were faced with just this, plus the added problem of Yahweh's people being carried away into a foreign land. The *Psalms* reflect the hopelessness of the situation: "As with a sword in my bones my adversaries reproach me, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" (*Psalm* 42:10.) "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (*Psalm* 137:4.) But the prophets used this occasion to spiritualize and universalize their God. They were inspired to see that the individual had a personal relationship with God, that God was accessible to him no matter where he was, and that he did not necessarily need the Temple or the group to worship. "Ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (*Jeremiah* 29:12.)

The full fruit of this monotheistic development was to come from the Exile. The Isaiah of the Exile proclaimed the absolute sovereignty of Yahweh, his sole existence, and the nothingness of all other deities: "Before me there was no God found, neither shall there be after me." "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." We are thrilled and moved by the lofty heights to which these inspired men of Israel climbed, and by the deep insights into the things of the spirit with which God rewarded their searchings. But we only see their full significance as we visualize the prophets proclaiming the unity, eternity, and the omnipotence, not of a God of an ascendent and victorious people, but of a humiliated and exiled nation. The prophets, of course, did not succeed in raising the spiritual level of their people

up to their insights—but that is a further story. The emphasis must be put on the great insights of the prophets. The future belonged to them and still belongs to them. The lesser ideas were the old, inherited jungle of primitive religion; the great prophets were the road builders laying down a highway through the jungle and out of it. Thus to see this unfolding history of the Bible is not only to understand its insights more clearly, but, more important, to understand something of the process of revelation that we may not only value it more highly, but that we may work through to the revelation that is needed for our modern world. God still has more to say to us, would we but condition and open ourselves to receive it. Our times sorely demand further insights that can come only by the Spirit.

Modern Rivals of Orthodoxy

Frederic R. Crownfield

As a result of the difficulties both intellectual and practical which organized Christianity has faced, there have been various attempts to modernize it or to find some substitute for the functions it used to perform. In general, these attempts have so far failed, as the results clearly show, both for the individual and for society. Individuals are increasingly subject to neuroses of varying degrees, in an appalling number of cases to such an extent as to be incapable of taking a normal place in the community. Society is threatened by tensions, international, racial, and industrial, which may well destroy it. Are the weaknesses of the substitutes for orthodoxy essential or accidental?

Just as Christian doctrine and practice have shown much variation, so have the attempts to improve on them. Each represents a different reaction to the new forces playing on religion, and each has carried through its attempt with its own degree of consistency. Yet behind them all is a common spirit, exhibited in each case to a different extent. This common spirit has two primary aspects, one scientific, the other humanistic.

Influence of Natural and Social Science

These modern varieties of religion have been influenced by the results, the methods and the point of view of natural and social science.

The results of scientific investigation have had a bearing on religion. The biblical cosmography and natural science generally have been abandoned. Hebrew and early Christian history when treated by the canons of historical method lead to quite a different view of the sequence of events, and to a recognition of various inaccuracies and mythical elements. This position can only be adopted by abandoning any view that the Scriptures were dictated word for word by God, as a set of beliefs and observances which He requires of men. In place of this, evolutionary aspects have been stressed. The Bible is valued as showing how men's ideas of God and of moral standards have developed to what is

asserted to be their highest point. This assertion, when made in this context, is purely arbitrary, for the scheme does not include any element which requires progress to stop at this point. In consequence, those who draw these conclusions from these premises more consistently, feel free to see signs of further progress up to the present.

Another direction in which the results of science have been influential in various attempts to modernize religion is in the substitution of techniques of psychological and social adjustment for the traditional techniques of religion. This has happened partly within religion itself and partly in rivalry to it. There has been a considerable development of pastoral counseling whose technique is based to a greater or less extent on modern psychological theories and practices. There has also been an increasing tendency to substitute directly the psychologist or sociologist for the minister. Conditions formerly supposed to be the direct result of the divine decision that they were especially appropriate to the needs or deserts of the victim are now attacked and improved without reference to any theological theories of their origin. Meanwhile behavior that used to be considered deliberately sinful is explained as the result of psychic and social maladjustments which are expected to yield to purely scientific methods of treatment.

Scientific Method

The methods of scientific investigation have also been borrowed by the modern rivals of orthodoxy. The startling success of these methods in securing general agreement and desirable results makes it easy to suppose either that there is nothing in religion or that religion must submit to the same methods. The final court of appeal is inference from data just as in the sciences. Either religion must be established on an empirical, inductive basis or discarded. Theology tends to be replaced by a science of religion based on the history of religions and the psychology of the religious experience. "Facts" are to be given the last word.

Along with the method went a point of view. Whereas traditional religion was largely concerned with providing for an otherworldly future, its modern rivals have put their emphasis on making the present scene more satisfying. This shift of interest

has led to an emphasis on doing and on concrete results which has quite displaced the more contemplative aspects of traditional religion.

Another consequence of this concern with results has been the practical identification of religion and morality. Religion has long been concerned with ethical questions, but now it is frequently claimed that ethical instruction is its sole business. Men are to be fitted for citizenship in a Kingdom of God which is really only a projection of their own dreams. Quite logically it is then supposed that its coming is a simple function of human effort. In this process the reference to God is very remote, except in so far as the association of His name with the project is expected to lend it a certain dignity and importance. Here again the clear-sighted recognize the adventitious character of the association and propose to drop it altogether.

Faith in Progress

A common characteristic of these supposed improvements on orthodoxy has been their faith in progress. The theory of evolution is boldly erected into the dogma that day by day in every way the world is getting better and better, and that it is inevitable that it should. Man has slowly but continually emerged from the slime, and the same cosmic forces which have brought him to his present high position will certainly bring him eventually to perfection. If anyone finds value in calling these cosmic forces by the old name of God, there is little objection, though perhaps there is equally little gain.

So far as this modern outlook professes to be religious, it is very different from the religion of the past. It is optimistic about human existence and its powers and possibilities. It believes that those powers and possibilities are quite of a piece with those which are open to observation by the methods of the sciences. It has largely lost any sense of guilt for failure. This is laid to impersonal conditions which operate in the same impersonal fashion as do the forces of mechanics, the model to which all natural activities are supposed to conform. This religion is boastful of its achievement in clearing away old rubbish and in banishing mystery. It makes much less of the creeds and practices in which denominational differences were grounded because it is impatient

of any theory which cannot be based on direct observation, and of any authority which cannot justify itself to the practical reason. Where the old religion centered on the knees this is centered in the hands.

The values of the new religion are thus primarily humanistic. It is natural therefore that in many cases there has been a complete repudiation of any explicitly religious element. God seems to have no essential place in the scheme. He is retained primarily for sentimental reasons. Many of the differences between modern theists and humanists are differences in terminology only. "Some call it evolution, but others call it God."

This basic similarity in the two positions has been more obvious to the orthodox than to either of their opponents. The fact has been partly concealed by the inevitable bitterness of family quarrels between modernists and avowed humanists, but it is revealed in the common front that both present in attacking orthodoxy.

Gains in the New Outlook

In many respects the outcome of this movement has been clear gain. In spite of certain confusions of its own the general result certainly has moved in the direction of greater intellectual honesty. One can be fully aware of the difficulties and problems involved in the theory of evolution and still be nauseated by the ordinary attack on it in the name of orthodoxy. And one of the saddest spectacles in the history of the human mind is the perverse use of fine intellects in the vain attempt to meet historical study of the Bible on its own ground and maintain the traditional account of the history of the Hebrews and of early Christianity. We do not need to regard such questions as finally settled to recognize that there is a refreshing candor in the new approach.

Closely following this has been a rightful protest on the part of common sense against unreasonable and crippling doctrine. If such a doctrine as faith alone means that man is held accountable only for his beliefs and not for his deeds, then it is well to destroy it. If predestination is used to justify evil-doing it should be abandoned. In short, to the extent (unfortunately large) that theology becomes a means by which a man could defend misconduct and evade his responsibilities before God and man, the most extreme humanism is preferable.

One consequence of the new view of early Christian history has been the recognition that many matters of church government and ceremony which still divide present day Christians cannot have the importance formerly assigned them. Each is indeed clearly represented in primitive practice, but equally clearly it loses any claim to be the one and only proper form. Similarly many non-essential theological excrescences have been lopped off and must never be allowed to grow up again.

Another clear gain from this movement has been a fresh outpouring of energy for an attack on social problems. In part this energy has been released by the faith that such problems were solvable, that conditions were the result of forces which could be manipulated, rather than the outcome of divine decree which could not or should not be interfered with. A further source of new energy is the restored perspective on the real meaning of religion that has come with the clearing away of the clutter of theological hair-splitting and trivial differences about observances. Biblical criticism with its new understanding of the Old Testament prophets has made an important contribution at this point. In another direction, the anti-supernaturalistic tendency served to awaken men to their own responsibility. They could no longer excuse their own laziness and inertia on the ground that if God wanted things improved he could bring about the change by fiat. In short the reaction from orthodoxy has quickened the recognition that crime, poverty, ignorance, war, industrial strife, and racial tension were the result of conditions which could and should be changed by men themselves.

Weaknesses

Yet in spite of these gains from the new attitude there were also losses and weaknesses. Some of the foundations were shaky and the results have not been uniformly good.

Part of the difficulty arose from the close alliance of the new point of view with the development of science. One of the characteristic methods in science has been the piecemeal attack on isolated problems. There the results of this method have been epoch-making. In the scientific study of religion they have been equally successful. But unfortunately the study of religion and the cultivation of religion are not the same thing. It is perfectly

possible to possess a wide and thorough knowledge of Semitic philology, Hebrew history, Church History or the History of Doctrine without having any first hand religion. Religion involves a relation to the whole of things, a relation of active commitment, quite different from the complete detachment of scholarship. Yet to keep the commitment from becoming fanaticism it is necessary to make its object as clear to the mind as possible. There is always the danger that the theory of the object will be confused with the object itself. That produces another form of fanaticism. But without some framework by which actions may be tested and in which our experiences find meaning, our lives are scattered and ineffective, and without the power to deal with difficulty and disappointment. Science does not undertake to supply such a view of the whole because it deliberately limits itself to the part. But a religion which adopts this partial view is bound to prove inadequate when times are hard. This is one of the sources of the current reaction against modernism and humanism.

As a matter of fact, the form of science from which the modern attitude toward orthodoxy grew is now being overhauled in the name of science itself. For some three centuries the science of mechanics held the dominating position, and there was a general expectation that eventually it would be possible to reduce all other sciences to it. Classical mechanics was essentially atomistic, and its basic elements were particles acted on by pushes and pulls. Each particle is just what it is in complete independence of anything else, exactly the same in relation as in isolation. Of course no religion, however modern, ever accepted this scheme with all its consequences. It offers no room for religion, purpose or value of any kind. Its effects have been indirect. Part of it was accepted because of its obvious success in its own realm, and various shifts were resorted to in the efforts to evade the obvious conclusions. Its ideal of explanation by means of analysis into independent elements was adopted, though the elements were to be different. But the real difficulty is that religion, which sees man's relationships as constituting his very being, cannot survive the atomistic approach. Meanwhile, with the rise of field theories in physics and of the concept of organism in biology, the atomistic assumptions have been proved inadequate

even in science. In consequence, modifications of traditional religion which are tied up with the first triumphs of science must themselves be overhauled.

A further influence from the triumph of the scientific viewpoint has been unfortunate. In making possible such an endless gratification of desires it has tended to put the chief emphasis even in religion on their satisfaction. The ideal seemed to be to make men comfortable. Science was in a fair way to realize this for their bodies and it was supposed that with a few modern improvements religion or some substitute for it would take care of their minds. This easy theory could not survive the events of the past decade or so. Depression and war have focussed attention on the human failures behind them and old questions of sin and guilt have emerged again.

Sin

It is at this point that the issue between traditionalism and modernism is most sharply drawn. Old-fashioned religion revolved about the sense of sin. In the new-fangled versions sin is either a side issue or entirely denied. So far as the sense of sin was, as often, morbid, based on a crudely anthropomorphic conception of God and a mortal dread of offending Him, the newer view represents an advance. Yet there are deeper aspects to the conception of sin which must not be lost sight of.

In the first place the conception of sin involves the notion of a fundamental obligation which is laid on man whether he likes it or not. It is not primarily a question of whether it makes him comfortable, or healthy, wealthy and wise. To fail to acknowledge this obligation is to be radically at odds with the nature of things. From this point of view any attempt to "sell" religion by painting the advantages it offers for the realization of one's own desires is a complete perversion of its nature.

The second important aspect of the conception of sin follows from this. There are two radically different orientations to this obligation, according as one defies it or accepts it. In the first case one asserts at least implicitly that the important thing is the gratification of his own impulses and life is organized about the attempt to secure this gratification. Even when it is discovered that this organization is obviously impossible unless the cruder

impulses are excluded, the self-centered orientation is still sinful.

Furthermore, this self-centered orientation is natural, in the sense that everyone adopts it and maintains it unless something forces him to face the situation and deliberately repudiate it in favor of a reorganization and reintegration of his life about a center beyond himself. This center of reorganization and reintegration cannot of course be chosen at random. It is given in the nature of things. The obligation to follow God and His will must be consciously adopted and patiently worked out.

When such a reorientation has been accomplished there is a release of energy, a heightening of powers, and an access of courage which give men the strength to do whatever needs to be done. On the other hand, any supposed religion or substitute for it which is not based on the demand for such a reorientation cannot meet the needs of our critical situation.

Results

It is not only the foundations of the modern faith that have proved to be weak. Its failure is also apparent in many of its results.

While in one way the changed attitudes have awakened a new sense of responsibility, in another way they crippled it by overhasty generalization of the principle of evolution. If, on the one hand, everything is being guided toward perfection by the inherent force of the laws of nature, there is no need for anyone to interfere. On the other hand, the survival of the fittest was used to justify *laissez faire* and cut-throat competition. In either case responsibility for solving social problems was evaded as successfully as by orthodoxy.

Nevertheless, these consequences have not been developed as generally as might have been expected. The general trend was a reaction from former inertia, until the movement had swung too far the other way, until the emphasis was unduly social. Individual and society are like notes and melody. The individual notes get their character from the melody, yet the melody gets its character from the notes. To emphasize either at the expense of the other is to renounce the possibility of having any music. Man is both a solitary and a social being, and he must be taught to hold the two in proper balance.

Closely connected with the overemphasis on society has been the overemphasis on activity. Here again it is not a question of activity or passivity, but of securing a proper balance between them. What a man does is the expression of what he is. What he is depends on a process of growth which only in part depends on what he does, in the sense of overt activity. Sometimes he needs most to wait, pray, reflect, and examine himself. When ends are clear and good, activity is needed to realize them. When they are obscure or evil, then action must wait. Overactivity under such circumstances—circumstances we find ourselves in today—must be either cause or result of unwillingness to face squarely the true situation.

The final failure of the modern substitutes for orthodoxy is often described as a lack of warmth. Frequently this protest expresses itself without any consciousness of its real nature. No one who is seriously concerned with the role of religion in the contemporary world can help being disturbed by the present multiplication of fundamentalist sects of highly emotional type. However distressing the fact may be it is clear evidence of a vacuum left by current substitutes for the old religion. One way of diagnosing the difficulty is to say that the new forms demand too much intellectual effort. What should often be said is that they demand too much intellectual effort for the return that they make to life. They appeal only to those who enjoy intellectual activity for its own sake. They are cold in the sense that they leave one cold. Too often the only appropriate comment is, "So what?" Of course a flight from the realm of pure intellect to the realm of sheer emotion is not the answer. Religion is concerned with the whole life of man in his relation to the whole universe. Whatever the role of emotion and intellect in life, religion must not single out one or the other for preferred treatment, or cultivate them for their own sakes. The lack of warmth and richness in much contemporary religion must be met by a deeper and fuller vision of life's meaning and possibilities. Religion rests not on credence but on faith, not on belief but on insight. Faith and insight involve belief, and call for vigorous intellectual activity to clarify and integrate our various visions into a harmonious unity, but the belief is not prior to the heart's commitment. It springs up along with it in response to its

demands. It still needs to be thought through and tested in the most rigorous fashion, but thinking does not now go on in a vacuum. Yet the circumstances of the vision do not guarantee the insight. It is not a higher approach to truth which dispenses with other knowledge and the usual tests. The superiority of faith to belief lies simply in the fact that in faith, belief is from the beginning fused with power. This belief is not cold and dead, nor does emotion have to be worked up in any artificial fashion with some feeble attempt to build a bridge between them. But when religion evokes true faith it becomes a power which nothing can withstand.

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